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Oregon Department of Education

AUGUST 2003



## From the desk of Susan Castillo

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

As we face another school year of fiscal uncertainty, we must continue to summon the energy and inspiration to support our highest priority, **Oregon's children**.

The good news is that we are making excellent progress and our students are experiencing success. But there is still much to be done. Right now in Oregon, we have a funding gap; and we have an achievement gap.

In order to close these two gaps we need to believe that regardless of external forces, we are in control of much of our own destiny. We must engage Oregonians as never before to boost school funding, and we must work differently to help kids achieve at higher levels.

Building on the work already done in Oregon by you and our other partners, we have established four priorities to help focus and guide our work:

- 1) To close the achievement gap
- 2) To take a comprehensive approach to literacy
- 3) To focus on middle and high school improvement
- 4) To improve the efficiency of the Oregon Department of Education

Our first priority, to have each student meet Oregon standards in reading, writing, mathematics, and science is not debatable. Although overall achievement is up in the state, it must be accelerated beyond current levels.

The Department's second priority is to take a comprehensive approach to literacy. The research is very clear. The ability to read, write, and speak well is the gateway for all learning. We know that students who read and write well will experience success.

It is also clear that we need to focus on a third priority: middle and high school improvement. We are maintaining high average SAT scores and reducing the dropout rate throughout the state, but middle and high school students are still not achieving to their full potential. In order to reach these students, we need to work differently. The time has come to consolidate our work into a more targeted statewide strategy.

Our fourth priority is to make the Oregon Department of Education more efficient—essentially, make it work better. We must become more relevant to the work educators do on a daily basis, more relevant to policymakers in Salem as they ask for accountability and data, and more relevant to the strategy of holding those same policymakers accountable for their policy and funding decisions.

Please feel free to contact me at [superintendent.castillo@state.or.us](mailto:superintendent.castillo@state.or.us).

Sincerely,

Susan Castillo

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## Workshops Set on Developing/Updating Limited English Proficient Programs

The Department is offering two programs to assist districts in developing new language instruction, educational programs, and content instruction programs for limited English proficient students at elementary, middle, and secondary levels:

- Sept. 23-24—Hood River Inn, Hood River
- Oct. 9-10—Tamastslikt Cultural Institute, Pendleton

Registration is limited to ten school districts. The limited English proficient plan is complex enough to need team participation. We are requesting district teams consisting of a minimum of three or maximum of five members to participate in these workshops. The team should consist of:

- An Administrator
- Two certified teachers (one elementary and one secondary)
- One or two ESL/bilingual teachers working directly with limited English proficient students

Registration is available on the Department's website, [www.ode.state.or.us/events/index.htm](http://www.ode.state.or.us/events/index.htm).

For more information, contact [Dianna White](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2707.

## Superintendent Castillo's Weekly Updates

Superintendent Castillo's weekly update provides an agencywide perspective on important developments within the Department of Education. Through regular electronic updates the Superintendent hopes to create awareness, increase communication, and encourage involvement with the Department. Weekly updates can be viewed at [www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/update/](http://www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/update/).

For more information (or if you'd like to subscribe) e-mail [Ed Dennis](#).

## TESA 'Adapts' for 2003-04

The Technology-Enhanced Student Assessment (TESA) System was used last school year by 50 percent of Oregon's public schools. TESA allows teachers and students great flexibility in determining test dates and provides up to three opportunities for students to meet or exceed Oregon's challenging benchmark performance standards. Students taking TESA-delivered test forms last year all saw the same test items, in the same order, just as they do on a paper-and-pencil delivered test.

The 2003-04 school year will see TESA move to a new platform provided by

## More 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grants to Come

The Oregon Department of Education will award an additional \$1.5 million for 21st Century Community Learning Centers through a competitive grant process that will begin in September. Proposals are due in November, and six to eight new projects should expect to receive grant funds in February.

Potential applicants can learn more about the grant and how to apply at meetings on Sept. 18 and 19. Projects must serve children who attend schools with high poverty rates, defined in Oregon as more than 50 percent poverty. School districts and community partners, including faith-based and community-based organizations can apply and are encouraged to apply in partnership.

Applicants can view their previous applications, a list of current recipients, resources, and hints on writing a successful application at [www.ode.state.or.us/iasa/21stcent/index.htm](http://www.ode.state.or.us/iasa/21stcent/index.htm).

For more information, contact [Janet Bubl](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2710, or [Cathy Lindsley](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2717.

our test contractor. This platform allows us to select from a pool of items that are most appropriate and challenging for the student's grade level given his/her performance on the test up to that point. Items are also selected to ensure that all portions of Oregon's standards are represented according to the test design developed by Department of Education assessment staff.

The fall TESA tests will be adaptive but will be selected from a small pool of items for each subject area at each grade level. This is necessary to continue the growth of larger pools of qualified test items. TESA-delivered tests should be drawing from larger item pools during the remainder of the school year and will be adaptive to provide more useful information for teachers and students.

The move to the new test platform takes time, work, and quality control. Our TESA start date for the coming school year is tentatively scheduled for Sept. 30.

If you have questions about becoming a TESA-school partner or about adaptive testing in general, please call [Dawne Huckaby](#), 541-391-0602, or [Bob Olsen](#), 503-703-7337.

## SFDA/DBI Web Addresses Changed

The web address has been changed for two Oregon Department of Education websites. The SFDA/DBI (School Finance, Data & Analysis/Data Base Initiative) site previously at [dbi.ode.state.or.us](http://dbi.ode.state.or.us) has been moved to [www.ode.state.or.us/sfda/](http://www.ode.state.or.us/sfda/). The Quality Education Commission site previously at [dbi.ode.state.or.us/qualityed](http://dbi.ode.state.or.us/qualityed) has been changed to [www.ode.state.or.us/sfda/qualityed/](http://www.ode.state.or.us/sfda/qualityed/).

For questions, contact the [ODE Help Desk](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2645.

## Social Sciences CIM Endorsement Available for Districts in 2003-04

The statewide test required to earn a social sciences CIM endorsement or meet social sciences benchmark standards will be available to all districts in Oregon in the 2003-04 school year. Schools should submit their requests to test students to their district and the district test coordinator will submit the request to the Oregon Department of Education. The performance standards (cut scores) set in August will enable districts to determine student achievement of the 2003-04 social sciences CIM endorsement.

Two participation opportunities will be available in 2003-04:

- Testing via TESA in the spring test window, or

- Participation in the spring paper/pencil test window.

The knowledge and skills test is available for benchmark levels 2, 3 and CIM. Similar to current design, the social sciences test will include multiple-choice items and may include constructed response items. The recommended first opportunity for benchmark tests, or end of course tests, is at the end of grade 5 for Benchmark 2, at the end of grade 8 for Benchmark 3 and at the end of grade 10 for CIM. Districts should select the appropriate test window to assess their students.

For more information contact [Leslie Phillips](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2317.

## 2003-04 Statewide Assessment Schedule

The dates have been tentatively established for the 2003-04 testing windows for the Oregon Statewide Assessment. To view the assessment schedule, click on the link [www.ode.state.or.us/asmt/](http://www.ode.state.or.us/asmt/), then go to the lower section of the page under "New/Updated Information".

standards will be available to all districts in Oregon.

If you have any questions about this schedule or about Oregon's Statewide Assessment, please contact [Phyllis Rock](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2258.

The testing schedule includes several changes from the 2002-03 school year:

- Assessments will be restored at Benchmarks 2 and 3 (grades 5 and 8) for the 2003-04 school year:
  - Writing
  - Math Problem Solving
  - Science
- Students at grades 4, 6, and 7 may participate in Mathematics and Reading/Literature K/S Assessments.
- Districts have the option of assessing students at grades 5, 8, and CIM in the content area of social science. Based on HB 2744, the assessment tools required to earn a social sciences CIM endorsement or meet the social science benchmark

## Commodity Food Distribution Orders Due in August

School districts who participate in the National School Lunch Program may place their orders for the September delivery of commodities as follows:

- Sponsors in the first order cycle may place their commodity order from 8 a.m., Aug. 18, until 10 a.m., Aug. 20. Surplus items will be available to allocate and add to your order between 10 a.m., Aug. 20, until 1 p.m., Aug. 21. The distribution period for this order is Sept. 2-15.
- Sponsors in the second order cycle may place their commodity order from 8 a.m., Aug. 29, until 10 a.m., Sept. 3. Surplus items will be available to allocate and add to your order between 10 a.m., Sept. 3, until 1 p.m., Sept. 4. The distribution period for this order is Sept. 16-29.

Information about ordering commodities can be found on the Commodity Food Distribution Program web page [www.ode.state.or.us/nutrition/cfdp/index.htm](http://www.ode.state.or.us/nutrition/cfdp/index.htm).

For more information, contact [Beverly Hassell](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2622.

## 270,000 TESA Tests Administered

In the 2002-03 school year TESA administered 270,015 tests. That number is a significant increase over last year and we expect even more schools to participate next year. The chart indicates the tests taken by benchmark.

If you are interested in learning more about the advantages of online assessment or have questions about becoming a TESA-school partner, please call [Dawne Huckaby](#), 541-391-0602, or [Bob Olsen](#), 503-703-7337.

	Mathematics	Reading	Social Science	Science	TOTAL
<b>Benchmark 1 (grade 3)</b>	24984	24288	—	—	49272
<b>Benchmark 2 (grade 5)</b>	35739	34577	834	—	71150
<b>Benchmark 3 (grade 8)</b>	36097	30769	1795	—	68661
<b>Benchmark 4 (CIM)</b>	39537	32983	3526	4886	80932
<b>TOTAL</b>	136357	122617	6155	4886	270015

## NAEP 2002 Writing Results Released

Between January and March of 2002, 132,752 grades 4 and 8 students across the nation participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) writing assessment. In schools across Oregon 4,581 students participated. This was the first opportunity for grade 4 students to participate in a NAEP writing assessment, however, grade 8 students participated in the 1998 writing assessment (149) and scored significantly higher in 2002 (155), according to the data released by the U.S. Department of Education last month. *(Note: scores cannot be compared across grades because each grade has a separate scoring scale with grade-specific cut points.)*

### Key Findings

- The average scale score for Oregon grade 4 students was 149 on a scale 0 to 300 in 2002, which is 4 points lower than the national average (153). Oregon

## Seeking Oregon Teacher of the Year Nominations

Each year, the State Superintendent recognizes Oregon's Teacher of the Year.

We are encouraging nominations at this time. There are many skilled and competent teachers who deserve recognition, and the Teacher of the Year can serve as a representative for all teachers.

Please take a moment to nominate a teacher from your district. We have extended the deadline—as long as you let us know that you are working on an application. The application is available online at [www.ode.state.or.us/hall/teacheroftheyear/2004/200304toyapp.pdf](http://www.ode.state.or.us/hall/teacheroftheyear/2004/200304toyapp.pdf) or contact [Paula Merritt](mailto:Paula.Merritt@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 4423.

For information about the Milken Family Foundation Awards, contact [Nanci Schneider](mailto:Nanci.Schneider@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 2353.

grade 8 students' average scale scores were 155, which was not significantly different from other students in the nation (152).

- The percentage of grade 4 students who performed at or above the *Proficient* level on the NAEP writing assessment was 22% in 2002, which was significantly lower than the nation (25%). The percentage of grade 8 students who performed at or above the *Proficient* level increased significantly from 26% to 34% between 1998 and 2002. Comparisons of Oregon grade 8 percentages were not significantly different from the nation.

### Subgroups by Gender

- In 2002, grade 4 male students in Oregon had an average scale score in writing (139), which was significantly lower from that of male students across the nation (144). Female students in Oregon had an average score (158) that was not significantly lower than that of female students nationwide (162). These scores demonstrate a 19-point gap between gender performance for Oregon students on the writing assessment.
- In Oregon, grade 8 male students' average scale score was 144 in 2002, which was not significantly different than scores of male students across the nation (143). Grade 8 female students had an average score of 167, which was not significantly different than scores of female students nationwide (164). Oregon's grade 8 females outperformed males by 23 points.

### Subgroups by Race/Ethnicity

- In 2002, grade 4 white students in Oregon had an average scale score (151) that was higher than Black (139) and Hispanic (132) students, but was significantly lower than Asian/Pacific Islanders

(165). This represents a significant gap (19 points) between scores for white and Hispanic students.

- Grade 8 white students in Oregon had an average scale score (157) that was higher than scores of Hispanic students (133), but was not found to differ significantly from the average scale score of Asian/Pacific Islanders (162). This represents a significant gap (24 points) between scores for white and Hispanic students. Oregon did not have a sufficient sample to meet the reporting requirement for grade 8 Black students.

### Subgroups by Student Eligibility for National School Lunch Program

- Grade 4 students who were eligible (138) for free and reduced lunches scored 20 points lower than their counterparts who were not eligible (158).
- Oregon's grade 8 students who were eligible scored 135, which was 27 points lower than students who were not eligible (162).

### Subgroups by Location of School

- In grade 4, Oregon students located in large towns (153) scored significantly higher than students in rural schools (143) and about the same as students in central city schools (151).
- Grade 8 students in rural schools (152), central city schools (157), and large towns (156) scored about the same.

Additional Oregon and national NAEP 2002 results can be accessed on the Department's Assessment website, [www.ode.state.or.us/asmt/naep/new.htm](http://www.ode.state.or.us/asmt/naep/new.htm). The results for the NAEP 2003 reading and mathematics assessments are scheduled to be released in September.

For more information, contact [Susan Huggins](mailto:Susan.Huggins@ode.state.or.us), 503-378-3600 ext. 2266.

## Department of Education Launches New Website Design

The new Department of Education website is online, and the design work comes out of over 750 interviews and surveys with actual users in order to make the Department website easier and more efficient to use.

We understand that the new layout takes a little getting used to, and there may be areas that need to be reviewed and improved. Here is what we wanted to accomplish with the new information design:

1. Reorganize the site

Change from the current department focus to provide information based on categories of content or tasks, such as school and district statistics and school finance, and on common, well-defined user groups such as press and parents.

2. Group-related content

Group the content from the user's perspective, so that all related content is available from one location, regardless of which Office(s) maintain the information.

3. Create landing pages for key sections of content

Each main section of content, such as School Statistics or Parents should include a section landing page. The landing page should provide a brief high-level overview of the content, and provide all relevant links.

4. Create a consistent navigation scheme

Identify the functions and content that need to be persistent (site-wide) and provide a consistent navigation

scheme for these. Also provide navigation methods that can be used with sections of the site.

5. Provide multiple ways to access the content

Cross-link all appropriate pages. This is currently done and should be maintained.

6. Maintain Most Requested Items

Maintain the most recommended sites drop-down selection list as users are familiar with it and it provides a dynamic list of topic shortcuts.

7. Maintain existing links

When possible, maintain existing link URL names so that people who have the pages bookmarked can still get to the data.

8. Maintain office/department classification

Maintain content division by Office, but move the Office names from the primary left navigation area and relocate them to a less prominent place. The majority of users do not search for content using these classification names.

If you are interested in sending feedback on the web design—what works,

doesn't work, is missing, inaccurate, etc.—please e-mail your comments to [Gene Evans](#). Include the link to the page you reference.

### Mark Your Calendars for the Annual Assessment Regional Workshops

The Office of Assessment and Evaluation will present a series of regional workshops required for all district testing coordinators, and open to any other interested parties. Responding to reduced funding, the format of these sessions will be new. Sessions will be presented via V-Tel with a representative on site to facilitate. There are only two dates for the workshops:

- Tuesday, Oct. 14—Multnomah, South Coast, Umatilla/Morrow, and Northwest Regional
- Thursday, Oct. 16—Clackamas, Southern Oregon, Malheur, and Lane

Details, including registration information, will be distributed to district testing coordinators in early September.

For more information contact [Cathy Brown](#), 503-378-3600 ext. 2259.

### Numbered Memoranda Overview

Numbered memos sent out since July's *Pipeline* are listed below.

DATE	MEMO No.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Aug. 1	<a href="#">147-2002-03</a>	Chronological Events to Consider in Building Budget and Election Calendars

If you have questions or comments about this publication, please contact [Gene J. Evans](#), communications director, at 503-378-3600 ext. 2237.